United Nations A/69/339

General Assembly

Distr.: General
21 August 2014

Original: English

**Sixty-ninth session**
Item 62 of the provisional agenda*
**Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions**

# Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa

## Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/150 on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa. It updates the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General submitted to the Assembly at its sixty-eighth session (A/68/341) and covers the period from 1 January 2013 to 30 June 2014. The report has been coordinated by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and includes information provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Labour Organization, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons. It also includes information drawn from publicly available reports issued by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.

* A/69/150.

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# I. Introduction

1. Reflecting a fourth consecutive year of increasing refugee numbers, by the end of 2013 Africa[1] was home to more than 2.9 million refugees, approximately one quarter of the world's total. While an estimated 168,500 refugees were able to return home in safety and dignity in 2013, the rate of new displacement outstripped the pace at which sustainable solutions were found. In total, Africa was host to nearly 13 million refugees, stateless persons and internally displaced persons, a number expected to reach 15 million by the end of 2014.[2]

2. During the reporting period, both new and escalating emergencies, triggered by extreme violence and human rights abuses, occurred in the Central African Republic, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, northern Nigeria and South Sudan. The United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator declared system-wide level 3 emergencies[3] in the Central African Republic and South Sudan, as both countries experienced massive internal displacement, and neighbouring countries — particularly Cameroon, Ethiopia and Uganda — received large refugee influxes. Meanwhile, protracted displacement continued into the second and third decades for some Somalis, Rwandans, Burundians, Liberians, Eritreans and Congolese in exile.

3. Consistent with the continent's long tradition of hospitality and solidarity, refugees continued to find safety and receive protection. Among the top 10 refugee-hosting countries worldwide, 3 — Kenya, Chad and Ethiopia — are on the continent. UNHCR reports that there are some 2.9 million refugees in sub-Saharan Africa, most of whom come from Somalia (778,400), the Sudan (605,400), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (470,300), the Central African Republic (251,900) and Eritrea (198,700). At the same time, there were numerous instances of asylum seekers and refugees being forcibly returned to their countries of origin, where their lives were in grave danger. Impediments to the delivery of humanitarian assistance and services to the displaced were unfortunately noted, including ongoing insecurity, bureaucratic and administrative blockages, as well as environmental constraints.

4. Despite strong support from donors, crucial gaps remain in the funding of refugee operations, particularly for more protracted situations, which suffer from chronic underfunding, which affects all United Nations agencies' operations. As an example, UNHCR operations in Africa draw approximately 40 per cent of the organization's annual global resources, but in the present funding environment, almost all resources are commanded by emergency response situations and continuing care programmes, with very little remaining to dedicate to solutions. In 2013 alone, UNHCR issued three supplementary funding appeals for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic and Chad emergencies to the

[1] For the purposes of the present report, "Africa" refers to sub-Saharan Africa.

[2] Unless specified otherwise, statistics on refugees, asylum seekers and returnees refer to figures made available by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at the end of 2013. Statistics on internally displaced persons are provided by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, in its report entitled "Global overview 2014: people internally displaced by conflict and violence", as well as by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. All statistics are provisional.

[3] The Inter-Agency Standing Committee has defined a level 3 emergency as a major, sudden-onset humanitarian crisis, triggered by natural disaster or conflict, which requires system-wide mobilization.

total amount of $271.7 million. The UNHCR 2014 comprehensive needs assessment budget for Africa was nearly $1.9 billion, as a result of the Central African Republic and South Sudan emergencies.

5. According to the Financial Tracking Service of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than $4.1 billion was contributed in response to 13 inter-agency humanitarian appeals for Africa during 2013. This represents an increase of $600 million from the previous year. Between 1 January 2013 and 30 June 2014, $405.9 million was allocated from the Central Emergency Response Fund to support life-saving humanitarian activities in African countries. About 62 per cent of that amount, or $251 million, went to 19 countries with a significant number of refugees or internally displaced persons. Some $192 million from the fund helped to enable a rapid response to new or rapidly deteriorating crises, and $60 million supported humanitarian programmes in poorly funded emergencies. About 27 per cent of funding to displacement crises was allocated to food assistance and 16 per cent for multisector refugee assistance. Operations in the Sudan received the most ($48 million) and humanitarian programmes in South Sudan ($42 million), the Central African Republic ($27 million) and Chad ($23 million) also received substantial amounts.

# II. Subregional overviews

## A. East Africa

6. East Africa, including the Horn of Africa, remained the subregion with the largest refugee population on the continent, although the absolute number of refugees and asylum seekers declined modestly, from nearly 2 million at the end of 2012 to 1.7 million at the end of 2013. While events in South Sudan overshadowed the situation of refugees throughout the subregion, the largest refugee camp in the world (Dadaab, Kenya) now holds some 400,000 refugees. The Horn of Africa hosts the largest number of registered unaccompanied or separated children seeking asylum, with nearly 4,600 registered with UNHCR, two thirds of them originating from South Sudan. Regionally, East Africa is home to the largest percentage of refugee children, at 60 per cent of the total refugee population. Uganda, with 60 to 70 percent in some areas, hosts one of the highest percentages of refugee children. More positively, returns also occurred in the Horn of Africa, with over 36,000 returnees to Somalia reported in 2013.

### South Sudan

7. The situation of Sudanese seeking asylum in South Sudan began to stabilize. The slowing pace of new arrivals allowed the refugee response to begin transitioning out of the emergency phase. In Upper Nile State, the new Kaya camp housed some 18,000 refugees who previously lived in flood-prone Jamam. In Unity State, a new camp, Ajuong Thok, was established to accommodate refugees relocated from Yida camp, while the presence of armed elements and growing tension with host communities raised protection concerns for the majority of the refugees who remained.

8. The security situation deteriorated sharply as violence broke out in Juba on 15 December 2013. Within weeks, thousands of people had been killed or wounded,

and hundreds of thousands were displaced. Despite efforts towards bringing the conflict to an end, Government and opposition forces continued to clash. Over one million people were internally displaced, in addition to more than 370,000 refugees who fled to Ethiopia, Kenya, the Sudan and Uganda.[4] The crisis also affected some 200,000 Sudanese refugees in South Sudan, whose location in remote sites, in conjunction with continued insecurity, severely hampered the delivery of humanitarian assistance. When possible, deliveries were made by air, significantly increasing costs.

**Sudan**

9. Sudan received nearly 85,000 South Sudanese refugees in the first half of 2014. The provision of protection and assistance was impeded by lack of access owing to administrative and environmental constraints. In South Kordofan and Blue Nile States, an estimated 800,000 people in dire need have been inaccessible since 2011.

10. Deteriorating security in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and the Darfur regions of the Sudan in the first half of 2014 is estimated to have displaced close to 440,000 people. In Darfur, a region already suffering from protracted displacement since 2003, insecurity displaced an additional 400,000 in 2013 and 322,000 in 2014. This brings the total number of displaced people in the Darfur region to some 2 million. The return of internally displaced persons in North and Central Darfur has done little to offset these increases in displacement.

11. In Abyei, of the 105,000 people displaced in May 2011, 44,000 remain displaced (20,000 in the Abyei region and 24,000 in South Sudan). The fighting in South Sudan displaced almost 3,000 people to Abyei.

**Somalia**

12. Finding durable solutions for the estimated 1.1 million internally displaced persons and 1 million Somali refugees in the region continues to be a challenge. Although conditions in many parts of Somalia are not yet conducive for large-scale returns, on 10 November 2013, the Governments of Somalia and Kenya and UNHCR signed a tripartite agreement, establishing a legal framework for the safe and dignified voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees from Kenya. By the end of 2013, nearly 3,000 refugees had expressed their intention to return, and a pilot return project was initiated, targeting areas where hostilities had ceased. To foster durable solutions, UNHCR launched the Global Initiative on Somali Refugees in November 2013, aimed at increasing collaboration among host States, Somalia, the Somali diaspora, donors and experts. Thus far, the initiative has generated innovative approaches that support self-reliance.

**Ethiopia**

13. Hosting the eighth-largest refugee population in the world, Ethiopia continued to receive a large influx, reaching more than 535,000 by May 2014. The largest population was from Somalia, followed by South Sudan, Eritrea and the Sudan. Owing to fighting and food scarcity, some 173,000 South Sudanese, over 60 per cent of whom were women and children, arrived in the Gambella region of Ethiopia in

[4] As at 28 May 2014.

the first six months of 2014. Humanitarian agencies worked to urgently provide temporary shelter, build new camps, combat severe malnutrition and ameliorate poor conditions of hygiene and sanitation.

14. Following a spike in arrivals in early 2013, the number of Eritrean refugees arriving in Tigray in northern Ethiopia remained high. They are being accommodated in the Hitsat camp, which has grown to 19,800 people. The large number of unaccompanied children — nearly 1,500 who have arrived since the beginning of the influx in 2008 — has raised protection challenges, and UNHCR established a multi-agency task force to ensure a joint, coordinated response.

**Kenya**

15. Kenya remained the largest host country on the continent, with more than 555,000 refugees and asylum seekers as at the end of May 2014, the majority from Somalia, as well as Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. In the first half of 2014, nearly 40,000 South Sudanese refugees arrived, a high proportion of whom were unaccompanied children. Overcrowding, insufficient water and sanitation, and high rates of malnutrition are of particular concern. A new camp outside Kakuma was established in the first quarter of 2014 to accommodate these new arrivals, while in Dadaab, refugees continued to arrive owing to the ongoing conflict in south and central Somalia. Although basic health care is provided to refugees, and disease early-warning systems were reinforced, the risk of meningitis outbreaks remained high among these communities.

16. In March 2014, the Government of Kenya directed all urban-based Somali refugees to relocate to the camps in Kakuma and Dadaab. Subsequently, it initiated a security operation directed at individuals without identity documents. More than 2,000 people were detained, among them refugees and asylum seekers. UNHCR and its partners worked to obtain access to persons of concern in detention and to negotiate their release. Meanwhile, the authorities relocated 850 refugees and asylum seekers from Nairobi to Dadaab and Kakuma camps, and more than 350 Somali nationals were deported to Mogadishu.

**United Republic of Tanzania**

17. Full implementation of the decision taken by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to naturalize more than 162,000 Burundian refugees remains pending. In June 2014, more than 2,000 descendants of the Wazigua ethnic group, known as Somali Bantus, received citizenship.

**Uganda**

18. After the conflict erupted in South Sudan in December 2013, Uganda received more than 100,000 South Sudanese refugees and five new refugee settlements were established. In these new settlements, as elsewhere in the country, refugees receive small allotments of land, in agreement with the host communities, helping to enhance their self-sufficiency. Uganda also noted a sharp increase in the number of refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2013, with nearly 30,000 new arrivals, and relocated refugees to settlements in Kyangwali soon after their arrival.

## B. Central Africa and the Great Lakes

19. The violence in the Central African Republic triggered subregional movements, as the country had long hosted hundreds of thousands of migrants from Cameroon, Chad and elsewhere. Many of these individuals fled the violence with the assistance of their countries of origin and international organizations. Receiving countries are in the process of identifying returning nationals, many of whom had left for several generations, and issuing them with civil documentation. UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other organizations are assisting the receiving Governments with registration to determine the documentation needs. While few refugee returns were noted in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (3,507) and Rwanda (7,305), the region is characterized by continued instability and protracted caseloads such as in Chad and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

### Chad

20. The escalating violence in the Central African Republic has forced nearly 100,000 people to seek refuge in Chad since December 2013, including some 14,000 refugees as well as Chadian migrant returnees and third-country nationals. Presently, over 61,000 migrant returnees and third-country nationals are living in transit sites and depend solely on humanitarian aid. Despite the closure of the border in May 2014, refugees continue to arrive in Chad, adding to the 67,000 Central African refugees who already sought asylum in 2003, some 340,000 Sudanese refugees, and the 1,500 Nigerian refugees who arrived in mid-2013. In support of populations in protracted displacement, humanitarian agencies have advocated for their inclusion in national development programmes and, in some cases, for their resettlement.

### Central African Republic

21. Since December 2012, violence and instability have displaced nearly 900,000 people within the Central African Republic as well as across borders into Cameroon, Chad, the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The situation escalated in December 2013, with widespread violence and further displacement. By June 2014, fighting between the Seleka and anti-Balaka elements had resulted in the internal displacement of some 536,500 people, more than 20 per cent of whom were dispersed among 43 sites in Bangui. Adding to nearly 250,000 Central African refugees already in the region, 144,700 fled to neighbouring countries, many arriving in a state of severe malnutrition and psychological trauma. The majority, over 100,000, sought asylum in Cameroon. The poor health status of the refugees, many of whom had walked for weeks to reach safety, resulted in high mortality rates for children under 5 during the first weeks of the emergency. The intensity of the violence and speed of the outflow overwhelmed humanitarian capacities on the ground, particularly in Cameroon.

22. Inside the Central African Republic, widespread insecurity substantially impeded the delivery of protection, food and health care. Humanitarian agencies assisted in the relocation of thousands of internally displaced persons from sites in the capital to safer areas within the country in March and April 2014.

### Republic of the Congo

23. The voluntary repatriation of refugees from the Congo to the Democratic Republic of the Congo began in May 2012, with some 109,000 repatriated by December 2013. As at June 2014, 43,533 refugees, from both the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, remained in the country. The Government expelled an estimated 100,000 persons to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, although it maintained that refugees and asylum seekers had not been targeted by the expulsions.

### Democratic Republic of the Congo

24. Multiple complex humanitarian operations were launched to respond to forced displacement both within the Democratic Republic of the Congo and across borders. More than 60,000 refugees fleeing the Central African Republic found safety in the Equateur and Orientale Provinces between December 2013 and the end of the reporting period, adding to 131,755 refugees already living in the country. Approximately 30 per cent of the arrivals opted to remain in the host communities, while others moved to new camps. Meanwhile, large numbers of people fled conflict and human rights abuses in the east of the country, seeking safety in Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. An estimated 2.6 million internally displaced persons remain in the country, more than 65 per cent in North and South Kivu, and some 440,000 remained internally displaced owing to attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army. Sexual and gender-based violence continues to be widely perpetrated.

## C. West Africa

25. The subregion was home to more than 366,000 refugees and asylum seekers, while the number of internally displaced persons was also on the rise. Security has deteriorated across the subregion, particularly in northern Mali and Nigeria, limiting humanitarian access and the delivery of protection and assistance. Nearly one third of the refugees in the subregion are living in protracted displacement.

### Côte d'Ivoire

26. By mid-2013, some 82,000 refugees displaced by the 2010 post-election violence in Côte d'Ivoire had returned home from neighbouring countries. Some 21,000 internally displaced persons also returned in 2013, despite persistent challenges, including insecurity and a lack of housing, basic services and livelihood opportunities.

### Mali

27. By mid-2013, violence by armed groups forced some 175,000 Malian refugees to flee to Burkina Faso, Mauritania and the Niger. The regional humanitarian response has focused on health and nutrition, food security, shelter, water and sanitation, and building resilience in the face of recurrent droughts. A return and reintegration strategy for Malian refugees has been developed, facilitating the signing of a tripartite agreement by Mali, Niger and UNHCR in May 2014. The Government has reported that some 28,000 people have already returned to northern Mali, although the situation is not yet conducive to large-scale return.

### Nigeria

28. With a volatile security situation in the three northern states of Nigeria, a state of emergency was declared on 14 May 2013, followed by military deployments, curfews and limitations on humanitarian agencies' access. The situation led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people; some 50,000 people crossed into Niger, 24,000 into Cameroon and 1,500 into Chad. In total, approximately 60,000 refugees have been registered and are receiving basic assistance. An inter-agency assessment revealed that nearly 650,000 had been internally displaced within the states affected by the Boko Haram insurgency.

## D. Southern Africa

29. The population of refugees and asylum seekers in southern Africa remained nearly constant in 2013, with 135,542 refugees and 278,633 asylum seekers at year-end. Owing to a positive push for the return and local integration of former Angolan refugees in Zambia and Namibia in 2012, and subsequent delays in the final verification of the former Angolan refugees in the provinces of Bas Congo and Katanga in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, there was a marked drop in the number of returned refugees, from nearly 20,000 at year-end 2012 to only 1,700 at year-end 2013. In South Africa, where most refugees live in urban areas, episodes of xenophobic violence continued, despite efforts to promote tolerance. For many other southern African countries with small refugee populations, the overall protection atmosphere remains largely unchanged.

### Angola

30. According to Government figures, over 20,300 asylum seekers and 23,400 refugees reside in Angola. Nearly half of the refugees who arrived from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the late 1970s are largely self-reliant. The Government of Angola and UNHCR are discussing the formal local integration of this group.

### Mozambique

31. Mozambique provided a very positive environment for self-reliance of refugees, who enjoy a high degree of freedom of movement as well as access to employment. A total of 1,101 metric tons of agricultural items were produced by refugees residing in the Marratane camp, both for their own use and sale.

### South Africa

32. South Africa was the recipient of the third-highest number of individually lodged asylum applications worldwide, with 70,000 applications in 2013. The majority of applications were filed by asylum seekers from Zimbabwe, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The total number of recognized refugees in the country stands at some 66,000, nearly half of the subregion's total.

# III. Protection

## A. National asylum systems

33. Asylum countries in Africa largely maintained open borders and continued to recognize refugee status for those in need of international protection during the reporting period. Yet, the increasing numbers of people and the deteriorating security strained the protection environment, and some countries began to more forcefully implement encampment policies as part of their response. While understanding the Governments' security imperatives, UNHCR and its partners continued to advocate against encampment as a general policy.

34. The Djibouti National Eligibility Committee resumed its work in 2013, to help strengthen the country's asylum system. The Government of Uganda, meanwhile, is developing an urban refugee policy that is expected to enhance protection for urban refugees and asylum seekers. Angola and Swaziland are currently drafting new refugee legislation.

## B. Protection of individuals with specific needs

35. Participatory assessments using an age, gender and diversity approach remain critical in informing the development of UNHCR operational plans. Regional strategies and programmes are based upon a firm commitment to the age, gender and diversity policy of working in partnership with the persons of concern.

36. A regional framework for the protection of South Sudanese and Sudanese refugee children, comprising 65 per cent of refugees from these countries, was developed by UNHCR and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and is guiding operational actors in a coordinated and prioritized response. In South Sudan, the child protection cluster worked to support some 42,000 children and adolescents, including through the establishment of 45 child-friendly spaces, the provision of psychosocial support and community education. In Somalia, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) assisted nearly 1,600 children formerly associated with armed forces or groups to be reintegrated into their communities. UNHCR also launched a three-year *Live, Learn, Play Safe* project to address the needs of unaccompanied and separated children, to be implemented in Ethiopia, Egypt, the Sudan and Yemen, representing an innovative effort to mitigate the risks associated with secondary movements. It provides support for the establishment of appropriate care arrangements, increased opportunities for education and livelihoods, greater access to family reunification and improvement of basic services.

37. Following negative legislative developments, and subsequent incidents of violence in several countries, UNHCR strengthened its mapping and monitoring of protection issues facing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and intersex persons in the region. At the country level, offices are reviewing needs and response capacities as well as gaps, with the goal of standardizing procedures to address the specific needs of those individuals.

38. Initiatives to enhance the protection of refugee women included the provision of safe physical spaces. The use of mobile services facilitated the provision of psychosocial assistance to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. In the area of prevention, training and awareness-raising sessions were offered to camp

inhabitants, such as in the Kigeme camp in Rwanda, where more than 25,000 women and children and 10,000 men were reached through the efforts of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), which also provided sessions to Government officials and members of the military. In Mali, 2,839 members of the military were trained by UN-Women on women's and children's rights in conflict situations and provided with information on sexual and gender-based violence.

## C. Registration and documentation

39. In the Sudan, the joint registration of refugees and asylum seekers in Khartoum was launched in April 2013, which enabled an assessment of urban refugee and asylum seeker populations and facilitated their access to documentation and refugee status determination. In Kenya, capacity-building is under way to support the Government in assuming responsibility for refugee status determination, and in Malawi, biometric registration was introduced in December 2013.

40. Universal and free birth registration remains a priority throughout Africa. Support has been provided to assist Governments in the establishment of birth registration systems, with an emphasis on the inclusion of refugee and internally displaced children. In the Central African Republic, extensive advocacy resulted in a draft presidential decree on free access to birth registration. Following the adoption of a Presidential Decree in Angola in September 2013, birth registration is now free for all nationals, though unfortunately this does not include refugees and asylum seekers. In Burundi, 35,000 returnees from the United Republic of Tanzania were given access to birth registration services.

## D. Mixed migration

41. Given the complex challenges of trafficking and related abuses reported in the subregion, the Government of the Sudan, UNHCR and IOM developed a strategy on smuggling and trafficking in the Horn of Africa and East Africa. Efforts by the Sudanese authorities, with the support of the agencies, have resulted in improved security in refugee camps in eastern Sudan, increased prosecution of perpetrators and enhanced assistance for victims. Since 2013, a sharp drop in reported incidents has been recorded, even while there has been a rise in cases in Khartoum.

42. Governments in the southern African region continued to implement restrictive border control measures to deter mixed migration, as part of their security portfolio. In South Africa, the refugee reception offices in Port Elizabeth and Cape Town remained closed throughout the period, significantly altering the refugee protection architecture in the country. In October 2013, a United Nations-facilitated seminar on the protection of refugees and migrants was held, with a specific focus on potential solutions through labour migration. Front-line Government officers were trained on mixed migration in Botswana, Malawi and South Africa and Zambia.

43. In August 2013, South Africa enacted the Combating and Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Bill. In May 2014, the Parliament of Zimbabwe passed the Trafficking in Persons Bill, which incorporates the Palermo Protocols into domestic law. The Bill is tabled for the President's signature at the time of reporting.

## E. Statelessness

44. During the reporting period, Côte d'Ivoire acceded to both the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Efforts continued to reduce the large number of people at risk of statelessness in Côte d'Ivoire. According to Government estimates, this included some 400,000 descendants of migrants who had settled in the country without establishing their nationality and 300,000 children who had not previously been recognized under Ivorian law at birth.

45. United Nations agencies continued working with both South Sudan and the Sudan to mitigate the risk of statelessness through the issuance of identity documents confirming nationality. Profiling and registration exercises were undertaken to ascertain the status of Chadian migrants who fled from the Central African Republic and are at risk of statelessness, as many may no longer have identity documents.

46. During its fifty-third ordinary session in April 2013, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted resolution 234 on the right to nationality. At its fifty-fifth ordinary session in May 2014, it adopted resolution 277 on the drafting of a protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the right to nationality in Africa. UNHCR remains active in advocating with the Commission for the adoption of this protocol. An action plan being developed by UNHCR in Addis Ababa and the Commission will look at the issue of statelessness on the African continent.

## F. Internal displacement

47. Despite progress towards durable solutions for some, the number of internally displaced persons in Africa was the highest yet recorded. Over 33 million people were displaced by conflict and violence worldwide at the end of 2013. The conflict in the Central African Republic, and protracted conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria and the Sudan, contributed significantly to the total; four of the five countries worldwide with the highest new displacement in 2013 were in sub-Saharan Africa.

48. Five additional sub-Saharan African States (Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi, Rwanda and Zimbabwe) ratified the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) in 2013, joining the 17 States that had already ratified it. The Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons engaged closely with regional organizations on the promotion, ratification and implementation of the Kampala Convention at the national level. Throughout 2013, a series of training courses and workshops were convened in collaboration with protection partners, including the Governments of 14 African countries in a workshop held in Kampala.

49. The 2013 High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges focused on the distinct challenges surrounding protection and solutions for internally displaced persons, showcasing the Kampala Convention as a regional legal regime. UNHCR provided support to the African Union to organize regional legal workshops on the Kampala Convention as well.

# IV. Humanitarian response

## A. Delivery of assistance

### Food and nutrition

50. In 2013, the World Food Programme (WFP) provided food to 2.4 million refugees in 23 countries in Africa. The number of recipients significantly increased owing to the emergencies in the Central African Republic and South Sudan. Owing to funding shortfalls, cuts of more than 50 per cent in food distribution affected nearly half a million people in three countries in particular — the Central African Republic, Chad and South Sudan. Refugees in Liberia and Burkina Faso were affected by cuts between 25 and 49 per cent, while refugees in Mozambique and Ghana received cuts between 10 and 24 per cent in food distribution during the reporting period. Even prior to the recent cuts, nutritional surveys in several African refugee camps between 2011 and 2013 revealed that acute malnutrition, stunting and anaemia were at critical levels.

51. This crisis led to a joint UNHCR-WFP initiative that highlighted the issue of food security for refugees in Africa and stressed that there will be severe funding deficits of $183 million for WFP and $39 million for UNHCR by the end of 2014. The campaign, initiated in mid-2014, highlighted not only the cuts in food rations, but the coping strategies that refugees resort to in order to survive, including school dropouts, early marriage and survival sex.

52. As for the effects of the funding shortfalls, WFP and UNHCR warn of an increase in tensions between refugee communities and surrounding communities. For example, the funding shortfall for food provision for the 17,500 refugees in the Dzaleka refugee camp and in the Karonga transit shelter in Malawi resulted in a noted increase in tensions with the surrounding population, which will need to be addressed.

53. Emergency responses throughout the region stress the importance of both the immediate provision of food and the need for a consistent delivery pipeline. Increasing efforts are also being made to transition from food distribution to cash and voucher transfers. In Niger, for example, 9,100 refugees benefitted from such programmes, while support for the refugee hosting communities contributed towards decreasing the malnutrition rates to below 10 per cent in all the sites except one. Similarly, in Burkina Faso, a combination of food rations and cash transfers is being provided to nearly 27,000 refugees. The critically high prevalence (24.5 per cent) of malnutrition in the Goudebou camp in the country led to the implementation of food distribution to all families from November 2013, reducing malnutrition by more than half.

54. For internally displaced persons, in places such as the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, food and nutrition assistance is being scaled up. Seasonal support has ranged from the provision of high energy biscuits in emergency situations to general food distribution in locations where they have found temporary shelter. For example, UNICEF and its partners are intensifying interventions to address the underlying causes of malnutrition as an integral part of their humanitarian responses.

**Public health and HIV/AIDS**

55. Host countries, the United Nations and humanitarian partners have mobilized to reduce morbidity and mortality levels in countries neighbouring the Central African Republic and South Sudan. These crises in particular have been characterized by measles and meningitis outbreaks involving refugees and the host population (Uganda), severe injuries, mental health concerns, malnutrition and lack of immunization. The situation has been compounded by limited access to basic care and impediments to medical evacuation. Through regional coordination, the World Health Organization (WHO) is strengthening surveillance and early-warning systems, and health clusters are mapping the technical expertise and capacity of partners to facilitate the provision of health services in priority areas.

56. In West Africa, continued identification of new poliomyelitis cases prompted intensive polio awareness campaigns. WHO and other United Nations agencies are supporting polio responses in countries including Mali, Somalia and South Sudan.

57. By the end of 2013, 97 per cent of refugees in Africa had access to anti-retroviral treatment on a par with the nationals of their country of asylum. Moreover, in 2013, 95 per cent of UNHCR operations had ensured services to prevent mother-to-child transmission for refugees on a par with nationals. Prior to the onset of the crisis in the Central African Republic, some 12,000 to 15,000 people were receiving anti-retroviral treatment in the country. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and partners conducted a situational analysis to restore patients' access to treatment. In four internally displaced persons camps in Bangui, UNAIDS also provided consulting support for HIV/AIDS testing, supported victims of sexual and gender-based violence, and worked on the prevention of mother-to-child transmission. To date, WFP has provided additional nutritional support to 3,200 people living with HIV/AIDS in the Central African Republic.

**Education**

58. Education remained an essential component of protection for children and youth affected by conflicts and displacements across Africa. Eighteen countries have completed or drafted refugee education strategies, including child protection and sexual and gender-based violence prevention and response elements, in consultation with host Governments, UNICEF and partners. Three operations have drafted emergency education strategies that respond specifically to refugee populations whose education needs have not been met, a notable trend in recent years, particularly in the Central African Republic and Mali. Seventeen operations have focused on providing support and access to host country education systems for refugees in line with the UNHCR Education Strategy 2012-2016. Working with ministries of education and partners to channel emergency funding into national system support at the onset of emergencies; providing age-appropriate accelerated programming for never-schooled populations; and including refugees in national education planning figures have now become essential considerations in all national and emergency refugee education strategies.

59. Accurate collection of data for school-aged children remains a challenge, especially data related to school retention and completion in addition to enrolment figures, and in non-camp contexts. The average enrolment rate for Malian refugee children in neighbouring countries is 44 per cent. Countries affected by the 2011 Somali influxes average a 40 per cent enrolment rate of refugee children overall.

The enrolment figures of South Sudanese refugee children are uneven across the region, but average approximately 40 per cent as at May 2014. The situation for refugees from the Central African Republic is more dire, with a current regional average enrolment rate of approximately 20 per cent. It is estimated that 85 per cent of school-aged children and youth in the Central African Republic refugee crisis had limited to no access to formal education prior to displacement.

60. Enrolment rates in secondary education for the African refugee population remain very low (often below 15 per cent), largely due to the higher cost of secondary schooling. This remains a priority area for improvement as increased access to secondary formal education has a large impact on preventing early marriage and pregnancy, forced recruitment, labour exploitation and multiple sexual and gender-based violence issues.

**Livelihood opportunities**

61. United Nations agencies are actively supporting strategies to improve the self-reliance of refugees, particularly to enable them to live within hosting communities, to work and to contribute to local economies. This approach has been crucial in several protracted situations, such as in Chad, Uganda and Zambia.

62. Further efforts to improve life in camps are evident in Eritrea, where refugees and their host communities participate in a multi-year livelihood/self-reliance assistance programme initiated in 2013, which includes support for animal husbandry and horticulture production. In Malawi, 17,500 refugees have limited access to arable land or livelihood opportunities. In response, a community centre was established to encourage economic independence and improved self-reliance through income-generating projects.

63. In Burundi, a total of 2,000 returnees and internally displaced persons benefited from a vocational and entrepreneurship training programme, followed by technical support for setting up cooperatives through a project by the International Labour Organization (ILO). Within the context of South Sudan, where education and literacy levels are low and unemployment and underemployment are high, ILO focuses on capacity-building through the introduction of basic market-relevant business skills, and the provision of start-up kits for 1,500 women and young people.

64. The Transitional Solutions Initiative is being piloted in eastern Sudan, targeting the 12 refugee camps and one internally displaced persons camp in a phased approach. It aims to consolidate camps and convert them into viable local settlements with income-generating opportunities by providing vocational training and access to microfinance services.

## B. Humanitarian response capacity and constraints

**Security of people of concern and humanitarian staff**

65. Security constraints throughout western and central Africa, principally in the Central African Republic and northern Mali, continue to restrict humanitarian operations and limit humanitarian actors' ability to reach persons in need. In the Central African Republic, intensified violence and instability during most of the first quarter of 2014 hindered the deployment of staff and the reopening of offices,

delaying access to communities in dire need of assistance. In Mali, the security situation in the northern part of the country for the past 18 months, marred by numerous security incidents conducted by Islamist insurgents, military operations and recent clashes, has affected humanitarian partners in their operations around Gao and Timbuktu.

66. The situation in South Sudan continues to remain unpredictable and precarious, with particular challenges in maintaining the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum. Indeed, the situation deteriorated during the first half of 2014, directly threatening the security of refugees and host communities, especially women and children.

**Access**

67. In South Sudan, food security dramatically diminished among isolated refugee camp populations between March and May 2014, despite extraordinary initiatives such as airlifts and local procurements. For the refugee influx in Cameroon, access remains difficult, costly and slow. Refugees arrive through more than 30 border points, dispersed along a border that is over 900 kilometres long. Many do not make it to the transit centres to receive immediate aid, and in some cases, it takes days to reach refugees who have arrived in remote villages. Extremely poor road infrastructure, further degraded by the rainy season, has hindered the movement of food, shelter and non-food items from supply hubs.

# V. Ending forced displacement

## A. Voluntary return

68. Over 168,000 refugees were able to return home in 2013. The most significant returns occurred to Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Equateur Province) and Somalia. In particular, some 20,000 Ivorian refugees were repatriated in 2013, and more than 8,000 returned from Liberia in 2014. Approximately 45,000 Ivorian refugees remain in Liberia, a fraction of the 220,000 at the peak of the post-electoral crisis in 2010-2011.

69. Some 1,666 Angolans were voluntarily repatriated in 2014, and more than 500 returned in the first four months of 2014. Repatriation of Angolans from the Democratic Republic of the Congo is being prepared through ongoing verification of those who remain. Meanwhile, more than 6,000 Rwandans returned voluntarily to Rwanda in 2013, predominantly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with a small number returning from Uganda. Following a ministerial meeting in Pretoria in April 2013, involving Rwanda and the main asylum countries, agreement was reached on an approach to the cessation of refugee status, tailored to the situation in each country of asylum. Finally, nearly 500 Ethiopian refugees in South Sudan were assisted to be voluntarily repatriated, some through emergency air evacuation in the early months of 2014.

## B. Local integration

70. The Government of Zambia has been implementing its decision to locally integrate 10,000 refugees who were born and raised in Zambia as second or third generation refugees, particularly Angolan and Rwandan refugees. This initiative includes documentation and socioeconomic integration interventions and is expected to be finalized by 2016. After 40 years of WFP providing assistance to refugees in the country, food aid was phased out in 2013. Only some 3,700 refugees remain on food assistance in the country. Local settlement initiatives have positive effects on household stability and earnings. For example, a study of households assisted in one local settlement project for refugees revealed an increase in the average monthly income, which has had a direct upward correlation to household nutrition, as evidenced by the 2013 Zambian Nutritional Survey, as well as increased access to other services such as child education.

71. At mid-year 2014, the process for local integration of Liberian refugees was finalized in the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria, and ongoing elsewhere. Nearly 1,000 individuals remain at risk of statelessness, as their Liberian nationality has not yet been confirmed. UNHCR is supporting the Government of Liberia to undertake missions to review these cases and find solutions. Nearly 5,600 passports have been issued and distributed to Liberian refugees in countries of asylum thus far.

72. The Republic of South Africa has issued residence permits to facilitate local integration of more than 2,000 former Angolan refugees. The Government of Namibia is in the process of issuing permanent residence permits to some 1,700 former Angolan refugees.

73. Local integration is also fostered through existing regional frameworks, such as the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment of the Economic Community of West African States. This has proved to be an important mechanism, for example for Liberian refugees whose status ceased during the year and who had chosen to locally integrate in their country of asylum.

## C. Resettlement

74. A record number of requests for resettlement — 28,452 — were submitted in sub-Saharan Africa in 2013, nearly double the number in 2012. This progress was facilitated by the improved identification of resettlement cases following registration/verification exercises. The regional strategy for the resettlement of refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, initiated in early 2012, has enhanced their resettlement opportunities from Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. At the time of writing, some 12,200 individuals had submitted requests for resettlement.

## D. Sustainability of solutions

75. Self-reliance projects were supported by the United Nations in at least seven countries in Africa (Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Kenya, Mali, South Sudan and Uganda), leading to the sustainable reintegration of over 2,500 refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees. In eastern Democratic

Republic of the Congo, 265 internally displaced persons (of which 120 were women) received training in microenterprise management. In Burundi, a business development programme for returnees helped increase income levels and improved social cohesion for over 300 households.

76. The UNHCR and ILO self-reliance programme in Dollo Ado, Ethiopia, supported by the IKEA Foundation, complements the Government's development programme and includes refugee and host communities. This programme prioritizes activities that increase refugees' self-reliance through a comprehensive livelihoods programme, in a shift away from long-term aid dependency. It aims to build refugees' resilience in anticipation of their return to their places of origin in western Somalia. A resulting increase in household income, including the ownership of animals and agriculture activities, has been noted in 2013. Innovative approaches to refugee shelters, renewable energy and camp layouts are also being piloted in Dollo Ado for eventual implementation in other operations. In addition to providing training on cooperative development and business management, business grant support has been made available by ILO to improve the livelihood of refugees. In Kobe, 57 business initiatives are being supported with funding of up to $3,000 for each initiative.

77. UNHCR is leading, through its Transitional Solutions Initiative, innovative approaches to facilitate rapid transition from humanitarian assistance to self-reliance, including in Cameroon and Niger, among other places. This approach involves the line ministries, civil society, the private sector and development actors to support capacity-building and empower refugees in the economic market and reduce reliance on aid.

## VI. Partnerships

78. The UNHCR Refugee Coordination Model, which seeks to ensure predictability and coherence in refugee emergency response, was launched in 2013. Owing to the varied nature of refugee situations, the model promotes flexible approaches and pragmatic coordinated response structures, bringing together Governments, United Nations agencies, traditional and non-traditional partners to enhance coordination and responses to these emergencies. Consultations with United Nations and NGO partners in Uganda in April 2014 explored challenges and opportunities presented by the model. An introductory workshop on the model, together with the issuance by UNHCR and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the "Joint UNHCR-OCHA note on mixed situations: coordination in practice" (on refugees and internally displaced persons), was held in June 2014 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Further missions are planned for the second half of 2014 to roll out the model, including in mixed situations.

79. System-wide level 3 responses have been declared in the Central African Republic and South Sudan. The South Sudan operational peer review is scheduled for late June 2014, initiating significant capacity and leadership strengthening and necessitating an operational peer review to be conducted within 90 days. Deputy humanitarian coordinators were deployed in both crises. The response both in the level 3 countries and refugee-hosting neighbouring countries was strengthened by the rapid allocation of funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund.

80. Since January 2013, the inter-agency Protection Standby Capacity Project has facilitated the deployment of eight senior protection officers to United Nations

agencies in Africa to support protection and child protection coordination, strengthen protection in natural disasters and assist Governments in implementing national internally displaced persons and durable solutions policies in countries including Burundi, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia and the Sudan. Additional expertise was also provided at the subregional level in southern Africa to strengthen the collaborative response of protection agencies and non-protection mandated organizations with refugees, returnees and displaced persons.

81. United Nations agencies implement protection and humanitarian operations in cooperation with national and international NGO partners. The latter are involved in every stage of emergency responses, from reception, health, nutrition, shelter, camp coordination and management, protection, child protection, water, sanitation and hygiene, and other sectorial responses. NGOs are also key partners in mainstreaming gender in the humanitarian response in accordance with the United Nations strategic results framework on women, peace and security, for example in the Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

82. Given the critical role that national NGOs play in responding to humanitarian crises, building their response capacity remains a priority. In 2013, the Africa NGO Task Force, representing some 60 national NGOs from across sub-Saharan Africa, held two regional training sessions in southern and western Africa on programme and financial management.

83. In 2013, at the twenty-first ordinary session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held in Addis Ababa, the Assembly adopted the Commission's Strategic Plan 2014-2017. One of the main aims of the Strategic Plan is to enhance the African Union's humanitarian fund, putting in place measures to achieve higher standards of protection and assistance for refugees, internally displaced persons and others affected by conflict.

84. In Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations Development Programme and UNHCR are developing a durable solutions strategy for internally displaced persons and returnees in line with the Secretary-General's preliminary framework on ending displacement in the aftermath of conflict, which establishes priorities and responsibilities to support durable solutions for these populations.

## VII. Conclusion and recommendations

85. Despite progress made in finding durable solutions, with many refugees returning home or integrating locally, new and ongoing emergencies in Africa caused massive internal displacement and resulted in an increase in the number of new refugees for the fourth consecutive year. Forced displacement has exposed people to many protection risks, including forced recruitment, sexual and gender-based violence, armed attacks, abductions and trafficking.

86. With a view to maintaining peace and security in Africa, and alleviating the suffering of millions of people across the continent, all States should fulfil their responsibility to protect refugees and ensure the human rights of all people. This includes respecting fully the principle of non-refoulement, maintaining open borders, combating xenophobia, ensuring the humanitarian and civilian character of displacement sites, and ending impunity for all forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence.

87. All States and non-State actors are urged to ensure rapid, unimpeded access of humanitarian relief to persons in need, including refugees and internally displaced persons, in compliance with international humanitarian law. They are also called upon to ensure the security of humanitarian workers, so that impartial aid can be delivered safely, even during ongoing hostilities. All African States are encouraged to sign, ratify and enforce the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.

88. All States and non-State actors are urged to respect international human rights and humanitarian law in preventing the forced displacement of civilian populations within State borders. When displacement is unavoidable, States should take all measures to safeguard these populations.

89. The States that have already ratified the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa are to be commended; African Union member States that have not yet done so are encouraged to sign and ratify this instrument. In addition, those States that have ratified the Convention should fully incorporate it into domestic law. All States should develop national internally displaced persons frameworks, as they can serve to prevent, manage and find solutions for all types of internal displacement situations resulting from armed conflict, general violence, violations of human rights and natural or human-made disasters.

90. African States that have not yet acceded to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness should consider accession. States are encouraged to work with relevant organizations, particularly UNHCR, to identify stateless populations and those at risk of becoming stateless on their territory and to review their national legislation to eliminate gaps that may cause or perpetuate statelessness.

91. All States, including countries of origin, hosting countries and donor countries, are urged, together with development, peacebuilding and humanitarian actors, to support the search for solutions for the millions of refugees and internally displaced persons on the continent.

92. Every effort should be made to make sure that displaced persons can re-establish peaceful and productive lives and do not remain in protracted displacement. Governments, together with development and humanitarian actors, must work closely in developing durable solutions strategies for refugees and internally displaced persons, including by incorporating them into national plans, ensuring access to employment and taking all preventative measures to end displacement.

93. States, humanitarian and development agencies and NGOs are urged to include affected populations as active participants in the formulation of priorities for programmes and activities that affect their lives at all stages of displacement.